

Township of Johnson

Letter from the Mayor

October 20, 2020

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If you wish to receive this monthly letter electronically please send an email to people@johnsontownship.ca containing your name, phone (cell & home) and if you own or rent property in the township, please include that address as well. The information will only be used to compile a distribution list for this letter or for township Emergency Management Planning purposes.

Johnson Twp Office As many of the residents may know by now we have a new Clerk looking after our municipal operations. Glenn Martin is coming to us, on loan, from Tarbutt Township. Glenn is an excellent addition and has an excellent track record at managing municipal affairs. We thank Tarbutt Township for its cooperation with Johnson in the sharing of resources.

Ontario Gov't & Covid 19 The Chief Medical Officer of Health is urging all Ontarians to:

- Limit trips outside home, except for essential purposes only such as work where it is not possible to work from home, school, grocery shopping, medical appointments, and outdoor healthy physical activity. In addition, travel to other regions in the province, especially from higher transmission to lower transmission areas, should only be for essential purposes.

Other safety precautions to be followed include:

- Practice physical distancing of at least two meters with those outside your household;
- Wear a face covering when physical distancing is a challenge or where it is mandatory to do so, and
- Wash you hands frequently and thoroughly; and follow gathering limits and rules.

For further information please check in with the Stop the Spread Business Information Line at [1-888-444-3659](tel:1-888-444-3659). Or contact our Public Health inspector, Brett Donaldson at Algoma Health.

Landfill Share Shed: The townships of Tarbutt and Johnson have recently completed an addition to the share shed at our landfill site. If you are visiting this facility please, please respect social distancing while in the share shed and on the property.

Transparent Garbage Bags Only: Black garbage are not allowed in the cell. We continue to have residents (or others) dropping off garbage in black plastic bags, and this practice has to stop. Please only use garbage bags that are transparent for disposing of garbage in the cell. We have asked the attendants to be diligent in enforcing this policy.

Hours of Operation: Hours of Operation at the Landfill are Wednesday: 12:00pm to 5:00pm and Saturday from 9:00 am to 5:00pm.

Fire Permits & Fire Bans This is a reminder that fire bans are set at the direction of the Province. Johnson Township requires residents to obtain fire permits each calendar year for any burning. The permits are only valid for the calendar year they were issued.

Out of consideration for our volunteer Fire Department, fires are only allowed after 5pm. Johnson's Fire Department is entirely made up of volunteers who are often not able to effectively respond to fires during normal business hours.

**Johnson's 2020
Property Taxes**

After considerable deliberation, Council has approved a 2020 Tax Levy to be set at 85% of the 2019 tax levy. This 15% reduction allows our tax rate to be more aligned with tax rates of other municipalities in our area.

Although I am confident that our staff can continue to operate our municipality within this reduced budget, any future capital projects that we want to undertake may require additional charges in future budgets.

**Special Covid 19
Funding**

The Province of Ontario has indicated that special funding will be provided to municipalities to help deal with the unexpected additional costs associated with complying with Covid 19 precautions. More details will be provided as we receive communications from the Province.

**Arena Closure
and Covid 19**

A unanimous decision was made by Council to close certain aspects of the JTCC for the 2020 – 21 season. We will not be putting ice in this year and ice related recreation activities will not happen this winter. It is important to note that this is not a decision to close the area permanently. There are 2 commercial operations currently using the arena facilities (the upstairs kitchen and the café). These operations should not be affected by the arena closure provided the operators continue to comply with all APH guidelines and directions.

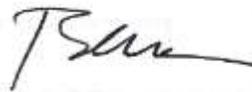
Council struggled in making this decision and it was delayed as long as possible in the hopes that we could find a way to open in a safe and efficient manner. We received a lot of input from concerned residents on this matter. Some reached out to me directly while others contacted Councillors to express opinions. Feedback was equally supportive and in opposition.

While it is clear that protocols required for our arena to open are doable, they are not cheap or easy to implement. To continue to be open through the winter would be very demanding on staff, and would mean that all employees working the arena would be placed at risk. These factors, as well as input from concerned residents were taken into consideration, however in the end, Council decided to err on the side of caution and close the arena in order to keep our community at a lower risk.

**Questions,
Comments?**

Please send them to MayorMersereau@JohnsonTownship.ca

Yours truly
Mayor Mersereau



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